

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS TO DR EHRLICH, OIH/DHEW

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: WHO

SUBJECT: MAJOR WHO DG SPEECH ON "CRUCIAL RESOLUTIONS" OF RECENT WHA

1. WHO DG MAHLER DELIVERED A MAJOR SPEECH IN JUNE TO WHO GENEVA HEADQUARTERS STAFF ON THE PROFOUND EFFECT THE RESOLUTIONS OF THE RECENT 29TH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY HAVE HAD ON THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS FUTURE. DIRECTIONS NOW BEING TAKEN BY MAHLER WILL BE OF INTEREST TO THE DEPARTMENT HEW AND AID. MAJOR PORTIONS OF THE SPEECH ARE REPRODUCED BELOW. COPIES OF THE SPEECH IN ITS ENTIRETY ARE UNDOUBTEDLY AVAILABLE AT PAHO.

2. MAHLER SPEECH TO WHO GENEVA STAFF, JUNE 8, 1976.

CRUCIAL RSOLUTIONS

" TWO CRUCIAL RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING PROGRAM BUDGET POLICY WERE ADOPTED AT THE TWENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALT ASSEMBLY. RESOLUTION WHA29.25 RELATES TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET OF JUST \$2,000,000 FOR 1976, NECESSITATED BY UNFORESEEN COSTS RESULTING FROM THE RECENT ADJUSTMENT IN THE SALARIES AND ALLOWANCES OF THE GENERAL SERVICE CATEGORY STAFF IN GENEVA. THIS RESOLUTION REQUESTS ME TO INSTITUTE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE A PROGRAM OF OPERATION-AL ECONOMIES IN THE HEADQUARTERS COMPONENT OF THE

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BUDGET, INCLUDING IN PARTICULAR REDUCTIONS IN EXISTING

STAFF LEVELS, SO AS TO PRODUCE UNTIL THE END OF 1978 FINANCIAL SAVINGS TO COVER ON AN ANNUAL BASIS THE COSTS OF THE SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET FOR 1976 OR OF ANY EXPENDITURE APPROVED FOR THE SAME PURPOSE IN 1977. RESOLUTION WHA29.48 GOES MUCH FURTHER AND HAS EVEN DEEPER AND LONGER TERM IMPLICATIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION. THIS RESOLUTION REQUESTS ME TO REORIENT THE WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING THAT ALLOCATIONS OF THE REGULAR PROGRAM BUDGET REACH THE LEVEL OF A LEAST 60 PERCENT IN REAL TERMS TOWARDS TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND PROVISION OF SERVICES BY 1980. IT INSTRUCTS ME TO DO SO BY CUTTING DOWN ALL AVOIDABLE AND NONESSENTIAL EXPENDITURE ON ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION, BOTH AT HEADQUARTERS AND AT THE REGIONAL OFFICES, BY STREAMLINING THE PROFESSIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CADRES, BY PHASING OUT PROJECTS WHICH HAVE OUTLINED THEIR UTILITY; AND BY MAKING OPTIMUM USE OF THE TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN THE INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THESE RESOLUTIONS WERE FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER MOST IMPORTANT RESOLUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, NAMELY EB58.R11, WHICH DECIDED TO ESTABLISH AN EXECUTIVE BOARD PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHARGED WITH ADVISING ME ON THE POLICY AND STRATEGY INVOLVED IN ORDER TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO RESOLUTIONS OF THE TWENTY-EIGHT AND TWENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLIES ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND ON PROGRAM BUDGET POLICY. THIS COMMITTEE WILL ALSO REVIEW THE GENERAL PROGRAM OF WORK, IN PARTICULAR AS IT RELATES TO THE BIENNIAL PROGRAM BUDGET PROPOSALS THAT I WILL SUBMIT IN FUTURE YEARS TO THE BOARD AND TO THE ASSEMBLY.

TECHNICAL COOPERATION

YOU WOULD SURELY WANT TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IS MEANT BY TECHNICAL COOPERATION. I WILL NOT ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE YOU WITH A PRECISE DEFINITION AT THIS STAGE, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT TECHNICAL COOPERATION SHOULD RELATE TO ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE A HIGH DEGREE OF SOCIAL RELEVANCE FOR

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MEMBER STATES IN THE SENSE THAT THEY ARE DIRECTED TOWARDS DEFINED HEALTH GOALS AND THEY WILL CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY AND SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE HEALTH STATUS OF THEIR POPULATIONS THROUGH METHODS THAT THEY CAN APPLY NOW, AND AT A COST THEY CAN AFFORD NOW. IN FORMULATING THESE ACTIVITIES TOGETHER WITH COUNTRIES, WE MUST NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THE AIM OF DEVELOPING NATIONAL SELF-RELIANCE IN MATTERS OF HEALTH.

THIS IS THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE IN TECHNICAL COOPERATION OVER THE NEXT DECADES. IT IS NOT A CASE OF WHO DOING SOMETHING FOR COUNTRIES. IT IMPLIES WHO COOPERATING WITH COUNTRIES, AND FOSTERING COOPERATION BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES THEMSELVES SO THAT TOGETHER A LASTING IMPACT IS MADE ON HEALTH DEVELOPMENT.

IN THE LIGHT OF THIS GENERAL INTERPRETATION IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE IS NO ROOM FOR WHAT I WOULD CALL "SECRETARIAT PROJECTS" THAT ARE SO OFTEN SELF-GLORIFYING AND SELF PERPETUATING; NOR IS THERE ROOM FOR THE WRITING OF THOSE DOCUMENTS, GUIDES AND MANUALS THAT OCCUPY STAFF EXCESSIVELY YET SERVE LITTLE PRACTICAL PURPOSE. WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE LEAD AND USE OUR SOCIAL CONSCIENCE AND IMAGINATION IN ORDER TO INTERPRET TECHNICAL COOPERATION HONESTLY AND TRANSLATE THIS INTERPRETATION INTO RELEVANT PROGRAMS. WE MUST MAKE SURE THAT WHATEVER WE DO CAN REALLY LEAD TO SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE HEALTH STATUS OF THE PEOPLE IN OUR MEMBER STATES, AND IN PARTICULAR IN THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH ARE LEAST ABLE TO FEND FOR THEMSELVES. THE EMPHASIS ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION TO THE LEVEL OF 60 PERCENT OF THE REGULAR BUDGET DOES NOT OF COURSE MEAN THAT THE EVENTUALLY REMAINING 40 PERCENT OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES ARE NOT IMPORTANT, BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT ACTIVITIES THAT CANNOT BE HONESTLY ACCEPTED AS TECHNICAL COOPERATION HAVE TO BE REDUCED IN SCOPE. THE 40 PCT INCLUDES NOT ONLY ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAMS BUT ALSO SUCH ASPECTS OF THE TECHNICAL PROGRAM AS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARDS AND CRITERIA, THE COLLECTION AND PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION FROM COUNTRIES AND RESEARCH THAT HAS NOT BEEN SPECIFICALLY SANCTIONED BY THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY. AS HAVING A DIRECT BEARING ON SPECIFIC NEEDS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

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\$12 MILLION REDUCTION

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN IN TERMS OF FIGURES? WELL, IT MEANS THAT HEADQUARTERS WILL HAVE TO REDUCE ITS BUDGET BY AT LEAST \$12,000,000 OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. WHEN THIS SUM HAS BEEN FOUND, HEADQUARTERS AND REGIONAL OFFICES WILL HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ENSURING THAT IT IS DEVOTED TO TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH COUNTRIES IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HEALTH ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE RELEASE OF THESE FUNDS CAN BE USED TO IMPROVE WHO'S FUNCTIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY AND TO LAUNCH NEW PROGRAMS THAT HAVE A HIGH DEGREE OF RELEVANCE FOR OUR MEMBER STATES. 23 ALREADY HAVE A FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVING FUNCTIONS AND

FOR LAUNCHING SUCH NEW PROGRAMS,NAMELY THE SIXTH
GENERAL PROGRAM OF WORK WHICH WAS ADOPTED BY THE TWENTY-
NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY. WE NOW HAVE TO MAKE SURE
THAT THIS GENERAL PROGRAM IS IMPLEMENTED IN THE SPIRIT
OF THE CHAPTER IN IT DEVOTED TO THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS
OF WHO DURING 1978-1983 AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
PROGRAM CRITERIA THAT HAVE BEEN ENUMERATED AND WITH
THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS TO WHICH I HAVE JUST REFERRED.
SOME PROGRAM AREAS WILL HAVE TO BE DRASTICALLY RE-
DUCED IN SCOPE OR ABOLISHED COMPLETELY IN ORDER TO GIVE
WAY TO OTHERS THAT HAVE GREATER RELEVANCE FOR
COUNTRIES. ALL THIS SHOULD MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO REDUCE
HEADQUARTERS' STAFF CONSIDERABLY WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO
THE ORGANIZATION'S PROGRAM AS A WHOLE. I HAVE THERE-
FORE DECIDED THAT IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO REDUCE
HEADQUARTERS' STAFF PROGRESSIVELY BY SOME 20 PCT OVER THE
NEXT FOUR YEARS, I.E., IT WILL HAVE TO BE FULLY RE-
FLECTED IN THE 1980/81 BIENNIAL PROGRAM AND BUDGET.
I HAVE ALSO DECIDED TO PLACE AN IMMEDIATE MORATORIUM
ON RECRUITMENT OF ALL CATEGORIES OF STAFF AT HEAD-
QUARTERS AND THIS MORATORIUM WILL CONTINUE WITHOUT EX-
CEPTION UNTIL WE HAVE DEVELOPED A PLAN FOR ACTION FOR
ARRIVING AT THE 20PCT REDUCTION I HAVE MENTIONED.
NATURALLY, I SHALL TRY TO REDUCE THE DURATION OF THIS
PERIOD OF MORATORIUM TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM SO THAT
THE RECRUITMENT OF STAFF FOR THE MOST URGENT PROGRAM
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NEEDSWILL NOT BE UNDULY DELAYED, BUT MUCH WILL DEPEND ON
YOUR COOPERATION IN ARRIVING TOGETHER AT THE 20 PCT RE-
DUCTION. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, I HOPE, THAT IN SO
DOING WE SHALL HAVE TO EXERT PLENTY OF SOCIAL AND
MANAGERIAL IMAGINATION TO ASSURE THAT DECENCY IN REGARD
TO STAFF PROBLEMS IS NEVER LOST SIGHT OF. THE STAFF
ASSOCIATION HAS ALREADY PROFERED ITS COLLABORATION,
AND I WANT TO EXPRESS MY SINCERE APPRECIATION FOR THIS."DALE

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